



# THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

## Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

December, 2000

Editor, Theresa Graham

### *PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE*

Let me take this opportunity to publicly thank and commend the Chattanooga chapter for their amazing job in hosting the recent fall meeting. A good time was had by all, and the birds (Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Golden Eagle, and even a Peregrine buzzing over the motel parking lot!) certainly cooperated. I won't mention the cold weather...(come on gang, can't you control that too?).

When I first took this office, I said that one of my goals was to increase TOS's participation in state and local conservation efforts. At the fall business meeting, we took another major step toward that end when the directors authorized the club to contribute \$6,000 towards the acquisition of Smith Bend, which is just north of Hiwassee Wildlife Management Area north of Chattanooga. There's more to that story inside.

I also want to take this opportunity to issue a plea for interested parties to consider serving in some capacity as editor or associate editor of the Migrant. Dev Joslin, after several years of outstanding service, is stepping down this spring, but his successor has not yet been found. Folks, I've said it before and I'll say it again - this is the most important position in TOS, because the Migrant is our legacy. Even if you are only interested in serving in a limited capacity, please contact either me, Dev Joslin, or Ron Hoff, the chair of the Nominating Committee. Given the size of the commitment, it's very likely that we will appoint more than one person to fill this position, although one person will need to serve as the supervising editor. However, such an arrangement will spread the time commitment around more evenly.

We are also still looking for one or two more people to serve on the finance committee to assist Treasurer David Trently. If you have any interest or expertise in this area, please consider serving on that committee.

Both the spring and the winter meetings are in place and plans are already underway. We do not have a location for the 2001 fall meeting, so if your chapter is interested, please contact me.

Good birding!

Chris Sloan

NASHVILLE TOS TO HOST TOS SPRING MEETING  
PARIS LANDING STATE PARK  
MAY 4-6, 2001

The Nashville TOS will be hosting the 2001 TOS Spring Meeting on the weekend of May 4-6, 2001. We have decided to have the headquarters for the meeting at Paris Landing State Park. This will give us the opportunity to take advantage of some really good field trip locations, such as Land Between the Lakes, Cross Creeks NWR, the Big Sandy Unit of the TNWR, Keel Springs Nature Trail (Cerulean Warblers!), the Henslow's Sparrow spot near Dover, etc. Please join us for a great weekend of birding in a beautiful location.

Paris Landing State Park (1-800-250-8614 or 901-642-4311) is located on US Highway 79, Henry County, on the western shore of Kentucky Lake, between Paris and Dover. A block of rooms is being held ONLY UNTIL March 20 at the rate of \$60.00 plus tax, so please get your reservation in early. They also have cabins at \$140.00 per night, which will hold 10 people. Please state that you are with TOS when making the reservation.

We are pleased to have Troy Ettel as our speaker at Saturday night's banquet. He has just recently been selected as TWRA's new State Ornithologist, effective December 1. His duties will include administration of the statewide nongame bird program. He received his M.S. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Tennessee in 1997. Since then, he has been State Zoologist with The Nature Conservancy in Texas, with a focus on birds. Please come and meet our new State Ornithologist, and hear his ideas on helping our birds.

More information regarding Friday's registration, Saturday evening's banquet, registration cost and a pre-registration form will be printed in the April issue of *The Tennessee Warbler*.



### Christmas Bird Count Season Is Upon Us!

The Christmas Bird Count period has now been fixed and will be from December 15 - January 5 every year. Compilers for CBC's in Tennessee are asked to submit their records for publication in *The Migrant* in addition to reporting them to the regional editor for Audubon.

Data to include: date of your count; weather; a list of the numbers of individuals of each species observed on your count this year; the usual tally of number of parties, party hours in the field, miles by car, miles by foot, number of feeder parties, time at feeders, hours and miles spent owling; notes or observations regarding particularly interesting finds (or failure to finds) this year relative to other years; and a complete list of all people participating in your count.

Please send your CBC results to Chris Welsh, state compiler, 5337 Hickory Hollow Rd, Knoxville, TN 37919 or via e-mail at [cwelsh@utk.edu](mailto:cwelsh@utk.edu)

**SEVENTH ANNUAL TOS MIDWINTER BIRDING WEEKEND**  
JOINT MEETING WITH THE KENTUCKY ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
REELFOOT LAKE AREA OF TENNESSEE AND KENTUCKY  
FEBRUARY 9 - 11, 2001

Trip Coordinator: David Trently ([dtrently@utk.edu](mailto:dtrently@utk.edu); (865) 531-1473 home; (865) 974-8664 work)

This is the first time in the history of the TOS Winter Birding Weekend that we will be based in Tennessee (first four years at Wheeler NWR in Alabama; last two at Huntington Beach, SC). This weekend will also take the place of the TOS Winter Meeting. (Somebody has to say it: "killing two birds...."). We are also inviting our neighbors to the north, the Kentucky Ornithological Society, to join us.

The Reelfoot Lake area always offers excellent birding opportunities, but it has been a long time since TOS has visited there for an organized event in winter. We should see lots of ducks and Bald Eagles. Special efforts will be made to find the following species: Short-eared Owl, Lapland Longspur, American Tree Sparrow, LeConte's Sparrow, Brewer's Blackbird, Western Meadowlark. There will be birding in both Kentucky and Tennessee, and we may be able to look across the Mississippi River at some birds in Missouri.

**Getting There:**

Reelfoot Lake is in the northwest corner of Tennessee. Headquarters for the weekend will be Airpark Inn, which is located off route 78 on the west side of the Lake, north of Tiptonville. Since birders will be converging from many parts of both states, please consult a map to find your best route there.

**Lodging:**

A few rooms have been reserved at the Airpark Inn. Call NOW to reserve yours! (800) 250-8617. 10% discount for senior citizens.

**Rates:**

Doubles:	\$72.80/night, including tax
Camping, with full hookups:	\$17/night
Tent camping (shower facilities available):	\$11/night

**Other Lodging:**

The new Reelfoot Lake Inn - Phone: (901) 253-6845, e-mail: [keefes@reelfootlakeinn.com](mailto:keefes@reelfootlakeinn.com). \$59 + tax. This is up to 3 people. Additional \$5 + tax/person. Senior rate: \$53.10 + tax. All rooms have 2 queen and 1 twin bed. Continental breakfast served each day. Located on the south side of the lake a little over a mile from the 4-way stop in Tiptonville. You may visit their website at [www.reelfootlakeinn.com](http://www.reelfootlakeinn.com).

Also, see <http://www.lakereelfoot.com/> for a lot more information about lodging, dining and much more.

**Food**

There is a restaurant at the hotel. Breakfast begins at 7:00 a.m. Field trips may begin at 7:00 both mornings; so alternate breakfast plans may be needed.

Plans are just getting developed, but here is some idea of the weekend's itinerary. Contact the trip coordinator for updates, which will be announced on the web site, <http://www.tnbirds.org>, and on TN-BIRDS.

**Friday: (sunset 5:33 p.m.)**

Official start of birding will be 1:00 p.m. Central Time. Those who can, meet at the Airpark Inn boardwalk. I will try to post an anticipated sequence of sites we will visit, so those arriving later can find us. Birding will continue until after sunset as we listen for owls.

**Saturday: (sunrise 6:51 a.m.)**

No meetings are scheduled (did I hear a cheer?). You should bring a lunch, as there is no guarantee we will be near any places to buy food for lunch. Birding will continue throughout the daylight hours.

**Sunday:**

Morning birding may be to search for any target species we have missed. At 10:00, there is the option of an organized eagle tour. This is \$4/person, reservations required (contact Airpark Inn). This runs 10:00 - noon. Birding will continue for those not taking this tour. We will probably meet at the Airpark Inn for a noon compilation.

## CHAPTER NEWS

The members of the **CHATTANOOGA CHAPTER** were pleased to host the TOS State Fall Meeting in early October. The 68 registrants saw over 110 species in field trips in the area. Some of the highlights were Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon (a fly over of the parking lot at the hotel), and numerous species of warblers. We enjoyed the opportunity to spend time with TOS members from across the state.

Several people came to see Giff Beaton's excellent presentation at our club meeting. He shared stories and slides about the compilation of his new book, "Birding Georgia", and club members snapped up autographed copies. Other programs included vicarious visits to Arizona, Colorado, Alaska, and Antarctica as members of our club reported on their long distance outings. Field trips included the usual local spots such as the Cravens House, Brainerd Levee, Reflection Riding, Baylor School, and Amnicola Marsh plus visits to Whigg Meadow, Smoky Mountains, Kennesaw Mountain, and the Kingston Steam Plant. We were treated to bird banding at several spots as well as hawk watching at Soddy Mountain. Good birding with good friends was in abundance.

While the Peregrine Falcons did not nest at Chickamauga Dam as in years past, they did nest in a more natural area on a cliff just north of Chattanooga. The birds still made frequent visits to the dam where the hunting was consistent.

During the last weekend in October, an area near Hiwassee Island was used as a stopover for Operation Migration in which hand-raised Sandhill Cranes are being "taught" to migrate behind an ultralight aircraft. This International Crane Foundation project plans to assist hand-raised Whooping Cranes in the same manner next year. In the meantime, preparations are underway for the Sandhill Crane Day at Birchwood near Chattanooga. The annual event will take place on February 3 and 4 this year. Make plans to come view the cranes and catch the various programs focusing on birds and Indian history.

We lost a good friend in July. Lil Dubke, wife of Ken Dubke, died after a lengthy illness. Lil was an environmental activist and a TOS member for over 30 years. She was an officer at both the state and local levels. One former local government official reported that he would decide which side of an environmental issue to take by finding out which side Lil Dubke was on and then getting on her side, because that would ultimately be the winning side. Her tireless efforts

and dedication have resulted in a better place for both man and wildlife. She is missed.

Danny Gaddy



**GREENEVILLE CHAPTER** - The biggest birding news of early fall in Greene County occurred on September 5, when Boyd Sharp of Knoxville sighted an immature Wood Stork on Highway 321 just north of the Nolichucky River. Greeneville chapter members Don Miller and Linda Northrop observed the bird later the same day, but several people from nearby areas in the region were unable to locate it over the following few days.

Other noteworthy migrants in the county through the end of October were Great Egret (1-10 from early Sept. to early Oct.), Little Blue Heron (immature on Sept. 10), Merlin (1-2 observed several days in Sept.), Sora (Sept. 16, 28; Oct 20, 28), Buff-breasted Sandpiper (Sept. 9-10, 16), Marsh Wren (Sept. 27 and Oct. 28), Vesper Sparrow (3 on Oct. 28), and Lincoln's Sparrow (Oct. 17-19).

The chapter's Christmas Count is scheduled for Saturday, December 16. For more information, contact Don Miller (423-639-4100; [raincrow@xtn.net](mailto:raincrow@xtn.net)) or Jim Holt (423-639-0525; [jholt@greene.xtn.net](mailto:jholt@greene.xtn.net)).

Don Miller



A priority for the **KNOXVILLE CHAPTER** this year is to improve the keeping and reporting of our bird records. We plan to keep official records for Knox and all contiguous counties, plus Morgan, Scott, Campbell, Claiborne, Hamblen, Cocke, and Monroe counties. This large area includes the majority of the areas routinely visited by KTOS birders. We are interested in hearing whether any other chapters currently keep records for these counties. We expect to use AVISYS birding software to maintain our records. If anyone else has used AVISYS for maintaining chapter records, we would appreciate hearing of any "lessons learned" before we get too far into it.

Daniel Moss, a graduate student in UT's Department of Forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries, presented an excellent program at our October meeting describing his research on grassland birds at Fort Campbell. For those who haven't seen a Henslow's Sparrow in Tennessee, Daniel's account



## CHAPTER NEWS

of finding 43 nests this past spring is near mind-boggling. And that's just nests! There were many more territories. His talk generated numerous questions and much discussion amongst a small but appreciative audience.

Upcoming field trips include one January 13 to Kyker Bottoms and another January 27 to Smith's Bend. Look for our newsletter on the KTOS link from the TOS website for further information.

Dr. E. O. Overton, 93, husband of Holly Overton, died August 3, 2000. E. O. and Holly had been married for 67 years. E. O. was a staunch supporter of Holly's numerous birding activities and travels.

Current officers: President, Chris Welsh; Vice-president, David Trently; Treasurer, Bob Steffy; Secretary, Jean Alexander. We'll soon be appointing a Bird Records Coordinator to go along with our record keeping efforts.

Chris Welsh



**THE LEE AND LOIS HERNDON CHAPTER** of the Tennessee Ornithological Society hosted Saturday morning bird walks at Sycamore Shoals State Park in Elizabethton during October. Both members and the general public attended the walks. A total of 23 people participated. A cumulative total of 60 species of birds was found over the course of the four walks. The best birds included Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Hooded Merganser, Northern Bobwhite and Common Raven.

The chapter participated in a Fall North American Migration Count on September 16. Restricted to Carter County, the count yielded 105 species, including such good finds as Northern Goshawk, Common Snipe, American Woodcock, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Sedge Wren and 23 species of warblers.

The chapter conducted its annual fall bird count on September 30. An American Bittern, found in Shady Valley, became only the second record — and a first fall record — for this Johnson County community. Chapter members Tess Cumbie, Bryan Stevens and H.P. Langridge sighted this bird. The count, which included locations in Carter, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington Counties, yielded 115 species. Among the good finds were Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Sanderling, Sora, Marsh Wren, Bobolink,

Grasshopper Sparrow and 20 species of warblers.

Several chapter members have made some noteworthy contributions to birding records in Shady Valley. H. P. Langridge, Bryan Stevens and Anthony Whitted, along with Laura Duncan, observed the first Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow ever recorded for Shady Valley on October 15. H.P. Langridge and Bryan Stevens found a second Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow in Shady Valley on October 27.

H.P. Langridge and Anthony Whitted observed the first LeConte's Sparrow ever recorded for Shady Valley on October 20. On October 25, Langridge, along with Rick Knight and Larry McDaniel, located another LeConte's Sparrow in the same location in Shady Valley.

Chapter member Allan Trently, a former president of the chapter, has been awarded the Goodpasture Grant for 2000. The \$500 grant will allow him to study Golden-winged Warblers in Hampton Creek Cove Natural Historic Area in Roan Mountain.

The chapter will conduct Christmas Bird Counts in Elizabethton and Roan Mountain. Dates have not yet been announced.

The chapter meets monthly at Milligan College. Current officers are: Bryan Stevens, President; Reece Jamerson, Vice president; Gilbert Derouen, Treasurer; Charles Moore, Secretary; Frank Ward, Historian; and Rick Knight, Statistician. For more information about the chapter, call Bryan Stevens at (423) 725-2165 or e-mail him at [kat92047@aol.com](mailto:kat92047@aol.com).

Bryan Stevens

### FEBRUARY 28<sup>TH</sup> DEADLINE

The deadline date for the April 2001 issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is February 28th. Please submit all articles, announcements, reports and items of interest by this deadline date.

#### Submit Material To:

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PO Box 366, Oakland TN 38060  
(901) 465-4263 (home)  
(901) 748-8000 (fax)  
e-mail: [2graham@bellsouth.net](mailto:2graham@bellsouth.net)

## CHAPTER NEWS

The **MEMPHIS CHAPTER** has experienced a change of leadership; our Curator of many years service, Martha Waldron, has turned over this important job to Rob Peebles. Our Chapter maintains continuous records dating from 1928 forward of which we are justly proud. Rob is only the third Curator in the history of the Memphis Chapter. Dick Preston agreed to take over the Rare Bird Alert.

In addition to serving as Curator since the late eighties, Martha Waldron compiled, wrote and saw through to publication three editions of *Seasonal Occurrences of Shelby County, Tennessee Birds*. She also served as Western Coastal Plains Regional Editor for *The Migrant* and forwarded West Tennessee records to the Manomet Observatory and "North American Birds". Martha continues to teach continuing education, bird watching classes at several institutions of higher learning in our area while acting as our contact not only with these institutions but many governmental and other organizations. We thank Martha for being such an important part of our organization and hope she will find time in the future to just enjoy birding and being a member.

Our chapter will host the 2002 Spring State meeting at Reelfoot Lake. Plans are already in the making!

Several members of our chapter are planning a late April/early May 2001 trip to the Dry Tortugas and Miami areas. They will be in search of such delights as the Mangrove Cuckoo, Snail Kite, and Red-whiskered Bulbul. The trip will last approximately 5-7 days. Member Charles Alexander is putting together a Brazil trip in late May, 2001. The Brazil trip will be approximately two weeks in length.

The Wolf River Conservancy and MLGW erected two nesting platforms on the east side of Humphreys Boulevard, 1/2 mile south of Walnut Grove. They hope for Osprey or herons.

The Ducks Unlimited/Canale waterfowl viewing platform at Eagle Lake Refuge will be dedicated on November 16, at 10:00 a.m.

Hats off to Debbie and Ben Bruce of Wild Birds Unlimited for their contribution of a bird feeding station to the Alzheimer's Home at the Jewish Community Center! Debbie has lots of research information and is available to do presentations on the therapeutic benefits of bird watching.

We also thank Keith McKnight of Ducks Unlimited for helping to obtain the pumping of water into two of the former fishponds at Shelby Farms, which helped to attract many shore birds and ducks during the prolonged summer drought.

A plaque honoring Lula Coffey was dedicated on November 12 at the Visitors' Center at Shelby Farms.

The chapter is saddened by the tragic death this summer of member Bill Thurmond. Bill, new to our club in 1999, had taken up birding with the same passion as he had for all his many pastimes, including his travels with his wife, Ruth.

Virginia Reynolds  
Gaynell Perry



**NASHVILLE CHAPTER** - The Nashville Fall Count was held Saturday, September 30, with a total of 130 species seen. By far, the best bird of the day was an Anhinga seen soaring over Percy Priest Lake by Jay Desgrosellier. A very rare bird here, there are at least 2 other records for the Nashville area, both in the fall. Other birds of interest included 2 Common Loons, 2 Gadwalls, 1 Whip-poor-will, 1 Great-crested Flycatcher, 3 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, 9 Wood Thrushes still here, 23 species of warblers including 1 Black-poll and 1 Louisiana Waterthrush, and 1 Orchard Oriole. A Brewster's Warbler was seen during count week at Radnor Lake.

Two pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers successfully nested just south of Nashville this summer, one in Franklin, and the other at the Smyrna Airport. The Franklin pair nested along the same road as another or the same pair did last year. They fledged 4 young, while the Smyrna pair fledged 5 young. Some of our members got to witness the exciting, and heart stopping, first flights of the fledglings. We're hoping they'll return next year for a repeat performance.

Jan Shaw



**STEPHEN M. RUSSELL CHAPTER:** The Bristol Bird Club held a birthday party to celebrate its 50th anniversary. All past and present members were sent an invitation. Fifty-three people were in attendance.

Janice, Fred and Rickey Martin hosted the BBC's annual picnic at their beautiful country getaway home overlooking the North Fork Holston River. It was a wonderful time with good birding and excellent food and socializing.

It's been an exciting year for rare bird finds in the Bristol area. The list includes Harlequin Duck, Yellow-billed Loon, Long-eared Owl, Common Redpoll, Black-capped Chickadees, Rough-legged Hawks, Merlin, Rufous Hummingbird, Laughing Gulls, Lark Sparrow, Leconte's

## CHAPTER NEWS

Sparrows, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Ruddy Turnstones, Whimbrels, White Ibises, American Avocets, Willets, Eared Grebes, Snowy Egrets and Mourning Warbler.

Rad Mayfield was the guest speaker at our Annual Banquet in September. His program was on his studies of passerine bird nests on the coastal tundra of the Askinuk Mountains in Alaska.

Kenn Kaufman was the speaker at the club's October meeting. He is one of the preeminent ornithologists in the field today. His wonderful slide program followed a day in the field with about a dozen BBC members.

BBC newsletter editor and former Secretary Amanda Martin became Mrs. Amanda McMullen at a fabulous wedding in which many BBC members were guests.

Current BBC officers are President, Janice Martin; Vice President, Dave Worley; Secretary, Larry McDaniel; Treasurer, Lorrie Shumate; Curator, Wallace Coffey; Statistician, Richard Lewis; and Newsletter Editor, Amanda McMullen.

Larry McDaniel



### *In Memory*

*Do not stand at my grave  
and weep, I am not there, I  
do not sleep.....When you  
awaken in the morning's  
hush, I am the swift uplifting  
rush of quiet birds in circled  
flight.*

**Lil Dubke** - Chattanooga Chapter, July, 2000

**Dr. E.O. Overton** - Knoxville Chapter, August, 2000

**Bill Thurmond** - Memphis Chapter, July, 2000

## TROY ETEL APPOINTED AS TWRA'S STATE ORNITHOLOGIST

Our interview panel selected Troy Etel as TWRA's State Ornithologist, effective December 1, or as soon as feasible thereafter. Duties include administration of the statewide nongame bird program. He replaces Janet York, who resigned this position at the end of March.

Troy brings good related experiences to this position. He received his MS in Wildlife Biology from the University of Tennessee in 1997. His thesis was directed by Dr. David Buehler and was entitled, "Predation of Artificial Nests in Grassland/Shrubland Fragments in Western Tennessee". Since then, he has been State Zoologist with The Nature Conservancy in Texas, with focus on birds. His work in Texas has included:

- Planned and conducted research and monitoring projects for birds on public and private lands.
- Prepared statewide bird habitat management plans for public and private lands, and worked with the landowners concerning implementation.
- Led a regional ecosystem planning team of wildlife biologists from multiple agencies.
- Coordinated with and trained Guatemalan biologists in avian research for a Neotropical bird exchange project.
- Besides birds, surveyed and planned for mammals, herps, etc.
- Inventoried properties owned by City of Austin and served as a Wildlife Biologist consultant to the City.
- Wrote grants and articles, and conducted public presentations.

In addition to the above, Troy has a strong interest in development of wildlife viewing areas similar to the "Great Texas Gulf Coast Birding Trail" for enhancing opportunities for wildlife viewing and habitat interpretation.

We look forward to having Troy back in Tennessee.

Bob Hatcher, Coordinator  
Nongame and Endangered Wildlife  
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency  
Nashville, TN

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## **ALLAN TRENTLY WINNER OF TOS' 2000 GOODPASTURE GRANT FOR AVIAN RESEARCH**

Allan Trently, a recent Masters graduate from East Tennessee State University and current Biology Instructor, is the winner of the 2000 Katherine Goodpasture Memorial Grant of \$500. It will support his independent project, "The Management Needs and Prescriptions for the Birds of Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area and Roan Mountain with Emphasis on Golden-winged Warblers and Alder Flycatchers."

The Tennessee Ornithological Society (TOS) makes this grant available via statewide competitive application for support of avian research projects in Tennessee. The Nashville Chapter of TOS and statewide TOS initiated the Goodpasture Grant in 1997. It is in memory of Katherine Goodpasture (1909 - 1995), who made significant contributions to Tennessee bird studies, primarily in the Nashville area. It is currently processed via the Conservation and Research Committee of TOS, utilizing donations in memory of Mrs. Goodpasture.

All grant applications were systematically reviewed and rated by a 6-person committee in accordance with the grant criteria. The other application was also very good:

David A. Aborn of UT at Chattanooga - Monitoring Avian Richness and Productivity at Lula Lake Land Trust

A 2001 Goodpasture Grant is also proposed for avian research in Tennessee as well as a 2001 TOS Conservation and Research Grant for projects that will directly or indirectly help to protect the birds of Tennessee, increase scientific knowledge, or educate others about the importance of Tennessee's birds. A formal announcement of the grants will be made before the end of the year and will also be posted on the TOS web site ([www.tnbirds.org](http://www.tnbirds.org)). The tentative deadline is April 1, 2001 for applications.

Melinda Welton, Co-Chair, TOS Conservation and Research Fund Committee

5241 Old Harding Road, Franklin, Tennessee 37064, (615) 799-8095, E-mail: [weltonmj@aol.com](mailto:weltonmj@aol.com)

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### **CRF Award Statement**

*Allan J. Trently*

First, I would like to say thanks to TOS for promoting the conservation and research of Tennessee birds. I am especially thankful for being the first recipient of the CRF award. I hope I can set a great standard for future recipients.

As the seasonal ecologist for the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, I was fortunate to be able to work on Roan Mountain and surrounding areas during the summer of 2000. One of these areas was Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area, an area known for its population of Golden-winged Warblers. Hampton Creek is a working farm and ranch. These practices keep much of the area in early successional shrublands, perfect for Golden-wings and other birds. Currently, a caretaker maintains the farming practices. It is believed that after the caretaker retires, the cattle and farming operation will terminate, thus allowing the area to succeed into forest. This succession will displace Golden-wings as well as Willow Flycatchers, Least Flycatchers, Alder Flycatchers, and a host of other birds, that is if the proper management is not initiated. Unfortunately, a management plan does not exist. In fact, after talking with Brian Bowen of the Tennessee Division of Natural Heritage (this is a branch of the Department of Environment and Conservation and has jurisdiction over natural areas), it is likely that no management will ever be initiated. With the money that I have received from the CRF award, I plan to write a management plan for the birds of Hampton Creek with special attention to the Golden-wing. It is hoped that this plan will prompt the discussion and the active implementation of management activities when needed.

I also plan to write management suggestions for high elevation birds of Roan Mountain such as the Alder Flycatcher. There is no current management plan for this community.

This project is only the first that I hope to conduct. I am hoping, with the help of TOS and others, that I may be able to study, promote, and conserve the birds of the high elevations of Tennessee. Thank you once again, TOS, for your work in the area of ornithology.



## Tennessee Cerulean Warbler Atlas and Conservation Efforts

*Melinda Welton, Project Coordinator*

The Cerulean Atlas Project continued in 2000 with a focus on three main areas: Reelfoot Lake, the Hatchie River and especially Royal Blue WMA north of Knoxville.

**Reelfoot NWR:** One or two birds have been reported from Reelfoot for the past several years. A total of 8 Ceruleans were found this year, all on the south side of Walnut Log Road.

**Hatchie River:** A foray on the Hatchie River was conducted with the help of NTOS, MTOS and The Nature Conservancy. A total of 7 singing males were located: 4 on the Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge and 3 on nearby private land. Over 75 miles of river were surveyed this spring.

**Royal Blue Wildlife Management Area:** Royal Blue is a 50,000-acre WMA located in Campbell and Scott Co. and lies in the core breeding area for Cerulean Warblers range wide. As part of a cooperative effort between TOS and TWRA to incorporate Cerulean Warbler management in the management plans for Royal Blue, a model and map to predict "quality Cerulean habitat" was created by Chuck Nicholson and Sue Marden and the TWRA GIS Lab. This spring I ground truthed the map and recorded 343 individual Cerulean Warblers. These data will be compared with the model to test its predictions.

TWRA purchased Royal Blue in 1991 entirely with funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This makes Royal Blue the only WMA purchased entirely with public funds. TVA, however, owns the mineral rights to most of these 50,000 acres. In September 1999 a permit was issued to mine coal from a 600-acre parcel. This mining will directly impact Cerulean Warbler breeding habitat.

In August of this year, TWRA officials classified the Cerulean Warbler as a species of Management Concern because of the documented decline of the species over the past 30 years in Tennessee. A meeting has been requested with TVA to discuss the potential impacts of coal mining to Cerulean Warbler breeding habitat on Royal Blue. The meeting is scheduled for November 6 and will be attended by

me, TWRA, the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy and the Southern Environmental Law Center.

## Recent Cerulean Warbler Developments

On October 31 a petition to list the Cerulean Warbler as a federally Threatened Species was submitted to the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service. The petitioners include a coalition of 28 local, regional and national conservation groups, including the National Audubon Society. The basis for the petition is the documented population decline of an average of 4% per year throughout its eastern U.S. range for a total loss of 70% between 1966 and 1999, making it one of the fastest-disappearing birds in the country." For more information on the petition go to [www.southernenvironment.org](http://www.southernenvironment.org)

## Shorebird Management on Eagle Lake WMA

As part of a cooperative effort between TOS, Ducks Unlimited and TWRA, a Shorebird Management Plan was developed and approved for Eagle Lake WMA. Unfortunately, personnel, equipment and weather constraints led to poor implementation for fall shorebird migration. Region 1 of TWRA and the Eagle Lake Manager remain committed to improving the area for shorebird use for both spring and fall 2001 migration.

## Tennessee Bird Records Committee

Paul Hertzell's three-year term as a full member of the Tennessee Bird Records Committee has been completed. I want to thank Paul for all of his excellent work with this committee.

Audrey Hoff has been appointed to take Paul's place as a full member. Michael Todd has been appointed to take Audrey's position as the alternate. Dick Preston has been appointed to a second three-year term as a full member. The current regular members of the TBRC are Kevin Calhoon, Mark Greene, Audrey Hoff, Rick Knight, Dick Preston, Chris Sloan and Michael Todd as the alternate.

Kevin Calhoon

## Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA) Update

Bob Hatcher, TWRA Nongame Coordinator

November 6, 2000

After strong national endorsement and momentum, our current prospects for CARA are much diluted. In May 2000, CARA passed by a 3-to-1 margin in the House. In July, it was approved by an almost 2 to 1 margin by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. It would be funded by reallocation of some of the royalties collected from oil companies for oil and gas leases on the outer continental shelf of the United States. It would have provided nearly \$3 billion in **guaranteed annual appropriations** each year for the next 15 years for parks and wildlife. Of that amount, \$350 million per year would have been provided to state wildlife agencies primarily for nongame wildlife. This would have included over \$6.0 in annual federal funds to TWRA.

The above CARA bill was endorsed by: over 5,000 national organizations, all 50 governors, and the National Council of Mayors, and the President of the United States. CARA was opposed by private lands rights groups, mostly from western states, where there was fear that more federal lands would be purchased. It was also opposed by Congressmen and Senators who favored annual appropriations over the proposed dedicated annual funding of CARA.

These minority groups somehow were able to derail the full CARA via an amendment to the Interior Appropriations Bill. In early October 2000, Congress authorized **annual non-guaranteed appropriations** of up to \$50 million for funding state wildlife programs, with the focus on nongame species. The President signed it into law. This would potentially provide TWRA with \$850,000 per year for **6 years**. However, annual funding would be highly undependable. Staffing and year-to-year planning would be very difficult.

In an effort to partially right the above wrong, Congress is considering a **1-year appropriation** of an additional \$50 million. State allocations would be based 1/3 on land area and 2/3 on population of each state. These provisions are amended into a Commerce-Justice-State Bill, which now appears likely to pass Congress after their current one-week recess for national elections. TWRA's nongame funding would potentially be an **additional** \$850,000 per year from one or both sources.

With the above undependable annual funding, TWRA would likely focus most of it on land purchases, annual contracts and partnerships for research, management, and enhancement of wildlife viewing areas.

CARA leaders in Washington advise they will again pursue the full CARA next year in order to provide the adequate and dependable annual funding needed for our nation's nongame wildlife.

## Smith Bend Acquisition Campaign

The Foothills Land Conservancy, a nonprofit conservation organization, has entered into an agreement to purchase a majority of the land in Smith Bend, a wonderful mix of upland and bottomland habitat located along the Tennessee River north of Hiwassee Wildlife Management Area. Presently, FLC is attempting to raise private money to fund the multi-million dollar acquisition.

At the fall meeting, Knoxville chapter member Dr. David Buehler invited Randy Brown of FLC to give a brief presentation regarding this project. Following the presentation, Dr. Buehler proposed that TOS, through state, chapter, and private donations, should aim to contribute a minimum of \$50,000 to this project. I am pleased to report that the directors voted for TOS to contribute \$6,000 from the state's coffers. However, I am even more excited to report that, courtesy of an anonymous \$40,000 donation (thanks, you're an angel, whoever you are!), TOS has already met and exceeded Dr. Buehler's ambitious proposal!

FLC has already given presentations to several chapters across the state, and is scheduled to do more before the deal closes in April. I strongly encourage each of you to consider making a small donation in the name of TOS to this effort. Not only is it worthy in its own right, but just as importantly, the more we contribute as an organization, the more clout we will have when it comes time for TWRA to develop a management plan for this land. It is our hope that a TOS representative, as we have done to some extent with Royal Blue and Eagle Lake, will be able to sit at the table with TWRA and make a significant contribution to the management plans.

If you would like to make a contribution, here's the contact information:

Randy Brown, Executive Director, Foothills Conservancy, 614 Sevierville Road, Maryville, TN 37804  
865-681-8326, [foothill@mindspring.com](mailto:foothill@mindspring.com)

One important footnote: PLEASE MAKE CERTAIN THAT YOU INDICATE THAT YOU ARE A TOS MEMBER WHEN YOU MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION. Otherwise, we do not get the credit that we deserve.

On a final note, to show that I am willing to put my money where my mouth is, I am pledging \$50.00 to the campaign on behalf of my wife and myself. I challenge each and every one of you to match that, or top it.

Chris Sloan  
[chris.sloan@home.com](mailto:chris.sloan@home.com)  
Nashville, TN

### SMITH BEND CHALLENGE FROM KTOS

Smith Bend is a unique 2,500 acre tract of land along the Tennessee River roughly halfway between Knoxville and Chattanooga. It includes 3 miles of riverfront, 1,000 acres of wetlands, and 1,500 acres of upland woods. The area has great potential for wildlife and especially birdlife. Efforts to preserve this gem are underway, but the price tag is \$6.9 million. TWRA has pledged \$5 million from the Tennessee Wetland Acquisition Fund, and the Foothills Land Conservancy has pledged to raise the final \$1.9 million from private donations.

We in the Knoxville Chapter believe Smith Bend is a terrific area of great importance to migratory birds. Because of this, we voted to donate \$2000 toward purchase of the property. We realize that not all TOS chapters are in a position to donate this sum, but we challenge other chapters to do what they can. \$10-\$20 per membership is a good goal. An opportunity like this doesn't come along very often, so we in the birding community need to put some money where our binoculars are.

### Changes in State Rare Listing Status of Tennessee Birds

Bob Hatcher, Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Coordinator  
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency  
November, 2000

In early 2000, recommendations were made by a panel of bird authorities for revised State rare bird listings. After obtaining further input from TWRA personnel, we compared overall recommendations with available data for each species. We then submitted our adjusted recommendations and justifications to a panel of 12 bird authorities, many of whom were on the original panel. None expressed objections to the proposed adjustments. In August, 2000, updated rare State bird lists were approved by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission for "Wildlife In Need of Management (Proclamation 00-14) and "Threatened and Endangered Wildlife" (Proclamation 00-15). The State list of "T&E" birds decreased from 10 to 8 species. The State list of "N" birds increased from 19 to 21.

Highlights of revised bird listings include:

- " The Bewick's Wren was uplisted from State Threatened to State Endangered.
- " The Bald Eagle was downlisted from Threatened to "In Need of Management" (N).
- " The Red-cockaded Woodpecker was totally delisted from State Endangered.
- " The Osprey was totally delisted from State Threatened.
- " Four species were delisted from "In Need of Management": Cooper's Hawk, Grasshopper Sparrow, Sandhill Crane, and Double-crested Cormorant.
- " Six species were initially listed as "In Need of Management": Henslow's Sparrow, Cerulean Warbler, Common Moorhen, Loggerhead Shrike, Black-capped Chickadee, and Golden-winged Warbler.

Justifications for rare bird revisions are given below.

Bewick's Wren	<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>	Moved to State "E" from State "T"
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In 1933, Gannett listed it as fairly common to common from West to East Tennessee. Breeding Bird Surveys during 1966-94 revealed a 22 % per year decrease. Since listing as State "T" in 1975, it has continued to decline, with very low numbers persisting in the Central Basin and Western Highland Rim. Several causes have been suggested for the decline in this species including increased competition from the House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*), loss of habitat and a series of severe winters.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker	<i>Picoides borealis</i>	Complete delisting from "E" in Tennessee
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Local populations of less than 50 birds are considered too small to be genetically viable, causing local populations to decline over many years. After unsuccessful attempts for transplants, the last known male disappeared from Tennessee in 1994. Remaining habitat is extremely scarce and takes 60 to 80 years to grow to adequate age. For many years, any birds that are available elsewhere for transplant are given priority to sites that have substantially higher potential for success than can be found in Tennessee.

Northern Saw-whet Owl	<i>Aegolius acadicus</i>	Moved to "T" from State "In Need of Management" (N)
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The resident population is very small and may number less than 100 adults. A very high percentage of the breeding season records come from the Smoky National Park and Cherokee National Forest. No census has ever been attempted over the entire range of suitable nesting habitat in Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Cherokee National Forest during the period of territorial singing in spring. (Fred Alsop, TWRA). The Northern Saw-whet Owl was documented in only four blocks during the fieldwork for the Breeding Bird Atlas. Declines in the spruce-fir forest may lead to a decline in this species in Tennessee.

Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaetus leucocephalus</i>	Downlisted from "T" to "N"
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From 1980 through 2000, 284 young were released from seven Tennessee hack sites. In 1994, Tennessee had exceeded the USFWS Recovery Plan goal of 15 occupied nests for at least 3 consecutive years before downlisting from "E" to "T" status. During 1999, Tennessee had 44 occupied nests that fledged 50 young. Significant increases are apparent for 2000. The U.S. is removing it from "T" status nationwide as soon as regulations are established for a non-federal listing status. The species should continue to be managed and monitored for at least five years under "N" status.

Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Completely delisted from "T"
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There were only 3 active nests in Tennessee in 1980. During 1980-89, 165 Ospreys were reintroduced at 16 statewide hack sites. During 1994-99, Tennessee's active Osprey nests increased from 76 to 131, an increase of 72 percent in five years.



Cooper's Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	Remove from "N"
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Statewide "Christmas Bird Counts" indicate gradual population increases in Tennessee since the mid-1970's. Nesting populations have significantly increased in recent years.

Henslow's Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus henslowii</i>	Initial listing as "N"
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A small nesting population in Stewart County was only recently discovered and may represent a recent range extension into the state or the discovery of birds that may have been present for many years.

Grasshopper Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	Delist from "N"
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Tennessee populations seem to be increasing since the mid-1980's especially in West Tennessee, or perhaps some birds have been located in areas previously unknown during the recent Breeding Bird Atlas surveys.

Cerulean Warbler	<i>Dendroica cereulea</i>	Initial listing. USFWS lists as of Management Concern (MC).
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Tennessee BBS routes indicate a large decline in Cerulean Warbler numbers between 1966 and 1994 (Nicholson, 1997). The most drastic population decline in Tennessee occurred between 1966 and 1979, losing 5.1% per year. Nationally, the Cerulean Warbler populations have declined at a rate of 4.2% per year between 1966 and 1993.

Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Initial listing as "In Need of Management"
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Although abundant for most of its breeding range, the Common Moorhen continues to be a rare breeder in Tennessee. In 1932, Ganier reported 25 moorhens and several incomplete nests at Reelfoot Lake. In 1984, Pitts reported 13 moorhens, including a brood and a pair building a nest, at Reelfoot Lake. They were observed during the breeding seasons in Knox County (1970), Maury County (1970's and 1980's), and a few other counties (Robinson, 1990). They were recorded in only six blocks during fieldwork for the Breeding Bird Atlas, with only four of these confirmed as breeding. With the tremendous loss of wetlands earlier in this century, the breeding habitat has been severely limited. The continuance of this species as a breeding bird in Tennessee may depend on management and habitat restoration.

Sandhill Crane	<i>Grus canadensis</i>	Delisted from "N"
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Sandhill cranes do not nest in Tennessee. However, their migratory winter populations have increased during recent years from maximum local populations of a few hundred birds in the eastern Tennessee River valley to a maximum of 10,700 at Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge in late January, 2000. During the last five years, resident winter populations have expanded to at least three West Tennessee wildlife refuges. The population at Hop-In Wildlife Refuge of Obion County increased from about 25 birds in the winter of 1996-97 to approximately 1,000 in January, 2000.

Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	Initial listing as "N"
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There has been an alarming decline in shrike numbers of over 80 percent reported on Breeding Bird Survey routes since 1966. This is one of the greatest decreases of any songbird population recorded in the state. The reasons for this crash in numbers are largely unknown, but factors for it must include: decreases in habitat, i.e., conversion of agricultural lands to natural and man-induced reforestation, urban development, conversion of small farms to large farms with the loss of shelter belts, hedgerows and old fields, and to pesticide contamination in their food chain. Recent surveys, however, indicate a slight population increase in the late 1980's and the 1990's.

Black-capped Chickadee	<i>Poecile atricapillus</i>	Initial listing as "N"
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Early work on this species indicated that the Southern Appalachian birds may be a distinct subspecies. These limited relic populations appear to be facing declines with the continued impacts of air pollution on the forests of the Southern Appalachians and loss of the spruce-fir forests. Alsop reported a decline of 17.5 pairs/100 ha in 1967 to 2.5 pairs in 1985. During fieldwork for the Breeding Bird Atlas, 19 reports of nesting Black-capped Chickadees were noted, with 17 of these occurring in the Great Smoky Mountains (Nicholson, 1997).

Golden-winged Warbler	<i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>	Initial listing as "N"
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The Tennessee Breeding Bird Atlas (Nicholson, 1997) documented this species in 20 breeding bird atlas blocks, with most of these on the Cumberland Plateau. Optimal habitat for this species is second growth of grasslands with shrubs, scattered trees and forest edge. Golden-winged Warbler populations probably peaked during the 1900's with the increases in abandoned farmlands. Declines in this species are attributable to changes in habitat, with the succession of these shrub-grasslands to forest habitat becoming the limiting factor for this species.

## HELP SAVE RAIN FOREST HABITAT - FOR FREE!!!

As most of you know, most Non-profit organizations now have websites on the net where amongst other things, you can make tax-deductible contributions (donations). Recently, a number of free donation sites have appeared on the net. These free sites essentially allow you to make a donation basically at someone else's expense. Your only cost is the time it takes you to make your free donation. Each site has a number of sponsors who have pledged to provide a predetermined contribution for each individual that visits the site and makes a free donation by clicking on the appropriate donation link. In return, the sponsors are provided a very conservative banner ad (i.e. a small button-ad) at the top and/or bottom of the website that is hot-linked to the sponsor's website.

So where am I going with this? Early this year a new website appeared whose specific purpose is to raise money to help save rain forest tracts which have been determined to be critical habitat and/or in threat of being lost to development. The "Race for the Rain Forest" website is a joint effort between Care2.com (the website sponsor) and The Nature Conservancy. Money raised through daily contributions on the "Race for the Rain Forest" website is donated to the Nature Conservancy's "Adopt-an-Acre" program, which purchases the rain forest tracts to prevent their loss to development.

Each donation currently contributes 0.0003 acres - or roughly 0.8 square meters. Donations can be made daily. While this may not seem like a lot, if only 100 listmembers were to make one donation each day, this list would be contributing 0.029 acres DAILY, 0.20 acres WEEKLY, and 0.86 acres monthly (30 days). And when you consider increasing this number by having spouses sign up under their own log-in name, cohorts not on this list, friends at work, etc., this number would grow significantly.

While "an acre per month" many not seem like much, imagine if [we] could save even 10 acres of bottomland hardwood habitat or freshwater marsh for FREE each year in Tennessee. Every little bit helps and as others who have worked to protect habitat will attest, if they had the option to save 10+ acres per year simply by "clicking on a button", they'd jump on this opportunity without hesitation. And while these donations won't save habitat here in Tennessee, they will work to save habitat where many of North America's breeding species overwinter, thus directly contributing to the survival of many Nearctic migrant species which breed in or migrate through Tennessee each year - outside of other selfish benefits such as providing a broad range of pharmaceutical compounds we take for granted....

So that each of you can see how the Tennessee Birds-Tennessee Ornithological Society "group" is doing collectively as a group, I have created a number of "list-groups" through which you can sign up and monitor your efforts. The list-group name for the Tennessee Birds-Tennessee Ornithological Society is "Tennessee-TOS". As of 31 October, the Tennessee-TOS list-group was in 225th place, having contributed 12,000+ square feet since 06 September.

Using the following URL hot-link will take you to the "Race for the Rainforest" website and link your personal account (once you sign-up) to the Tennessee-TOS list-group so you can track the group's collective efforts:

Tennessee Birds // Tennessee Ornithological Society  
<http://rainforest.care2.com/i?p=336893967>

You can also link directly to the Tennessee-TOS list-group by clicking on the "Race for the Rain Forest!" button on the TOS website:  
<http://www.tnbirds.org/>

While creating the list-groups allows for a "competitive race" between the various list-groups as a means to encourage participation (for those of you with that competitive spirit), the real "Race" is to save rainforest habitat, and ultimately the birds we spend so much time seeking each year.

By the time you read this, a fourth 100-day race will have begun (08 November 2000) and all race totals will be reset to zero for the start of the new race. Thus the Tennessee-TOS list-group will be on the same level as the Alabama-AOS, Louisiana-LOS, Mississippi-MOS, and Texas-TOS list-groups once Race Four starts. Even if you're not one that espouses that "competitive spirit", it is my hope that you will take the time to help us win this crucial race.... After all, it's FREE!!!!

So..... Click away!!!  
Keith Kimmerle  
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